

REMARKS

This Preliminary Amendment cancels, without prejudice, original claims 1-8 in the underlying PCT Application No. PCT/DE98/01568, and adds new claims 9-18. The new claims conform the claims to U.S. Patent and Trademark Office rules and do not add new matter to the application.

The amendments to the specification and abstract are to conform the specification and abstract to U.S. Patent and Trademark Office rules, and do not introduce new matter into the application.

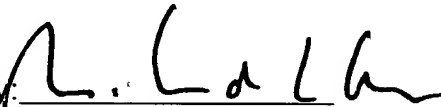
The underlying PCT Application No. PCT/DE98/01568 includes an International Search Report, dated November 16, 1998, a copy of which is included. The Search Report includes a list of documents that were considered by the Examiner in the underlying PCT application.

The underlying PCT Application No. PCT/DE98/01568 also includes an International Preliminary Examination Report, dated July 1, 1999, a copy of which is included, including a translation.

Applicants assert that the present invention is new, non-obvious, and useful. Prompt consideration and allowance of the claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

KENYON & KENYON

By: 

Richard L. Mayer
Reg. No. 22,490

One Broadway
New York, NY 10004
(212) 425-7200

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